Use Your Voice to Connect with Your Audience

1. Focus

Explain Using Your Personal Voice to Connect with Your Audience

Say: When I write a personal narrative, I want to make a connection with my audience. I want my readers to feel like they are sitting at the kitchen table having a conversation with just me. To do this, I have to write like I speak. When I speak, I don’t use formal language and grammar. I use everyday words, and I might not use the best grammar. Today I’m going to show you how to include this type of voice in your personal narrative so that you can make a connection to your readers.

Model How Writers Use Their Personal Voice to Connect with Their Audience

Display the modeling text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

I felt a little left out because everyone else in the room held him. It didn’t matter much to me though. I couldn’t take my eyes off him. Nazaih had hazel eyes, soft, smooth skin and lots of hair.

Natalia was in pain, so we needed to let her be. It wasn’t until later in the day that I got to see my little Nazaih again.

Modeling Text

Ask students to listen as you read the passage aloud and to listen for the author’s personal voice.

Say: This text has two good examples of personal voice. Look at the second sentence. The author says, “That didn’t matter much to me.” I bet this is exactly the way the author speaks. She could have said, “That didn’t matter to me.” Adding the word “much” to her sentence makes the author’s words sound like her everyday speech. She does the same thing in the second paragraph when she says, “so we needed to let her be.” The author could have said, “so we needed to let her rest,” but that wouldn’t have sounded like her personal voice. I’ve heard my mother and father use these two phrases a lot, so I can really relate to what the author is saying, and those phrases caught my attention. I’m going to underline those sentences and label them author’s personal voice. Underline and label the identified sentences.

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

• Identify one aspect of voice as making a connection to the audience through words that the author might really say.
• Learn how to include voice by adding words that reflect the way they speak.
• Discuss how to apply this strategy to their independent writing.

Preparation

Materials Needed

• Chart paper and markers
• Interactive whiteboard resources

Advanced Preparation

If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the modeling and practice texts (from “Nazaih Arrives”) onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson.
2. Rehearse

Practice Writing Your Personal Voice

Write the practice text on chart paper or the whiteboard.

We went to the grocery story on Saturday.

Ask students to add voice to this sentence. Students can change the existing sentence and/or add additional text so that readers will hear their voice. Students should write down their sentences and be prepared to read them to the class and explain how they made a connection to their readers through their personal voice.

Share Practice Sentences

Bring students together and invite them to read aloud their sentences and explain how they made a connection with their audience. Have students identify their personal voice. Record students’ sentences and post these as models for students to use as they write their own personal narratives.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We just learned that adding your own voice to personal narratives is one way to make connections with your audience. Remember, a good personal narrative has a strong voice that readers can connect to. As you write your personal narrative, remember to write like your speak.

Have students identify a section of their personal narrative that they can improve by adding voice to make a connection with their audience. During conferences, reinforce students’ use of voice and other author’s craft skills using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring the class together. Invite 2 or 3 students who effectively revised for voice to read aloud the section of their personal narrative that they improved.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning and Intermediate
Model how you talk about yourself using sentences that begin with I. Invite students to tell you about a drawing or photograph of themselves using the sentences that begin with I. Reinforce that writers “talk” on paper using their own individual voices.

Advanced
Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the partner activity.

All Levels
If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates: voice/la voz.